

IN THE CLAIMS

1-75. Cancelled.

76. (Currently amended) An elongated guide wire for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending central axis, ~~and the guide wire extending axially between a distal end for accessing the remote site, and a spaced apart~~ and a proximal end, and the guide wire comprising an elongated core wire extending from the proximal end and terminating in a distal portion adjacent the distal end of the guide wire the distal portion of the core wire being of substantially rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of spaced apart major surfaces, and a pair of spaced apart minor surfaces extending between the major surfaces, the major surfaces of the distal portion of the core wire converging towards the distal end, and the distal portion adjacent the distal end of the guide wire further defining a central major plane lying intermediate the major surfaces and bisecting the minor surfaces, and a central minor plane lying intermediate the minor surfaces and bisecting the major surfaces, wherein the distal portion of the core wire is bent into a curved configuration in the central major plane for forming an alignment portion lying in the central major plane and extending from the bend at an angle greater than zero relative to the central axis for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.

77. (Previously submitted) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the alignment portion extends relative to the central axis at an angle in the range of 30° to 90°.

78. (Previously submitted) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is of a material for retaining the distal portion in the curved configuration formed by the bend.

79. (Cancelled).

80. (Cancelled).

81. (Previously submitted) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which a reinforcing means is provided on the distal portion of the core wire for minimising bending of the distal portion in the central minor plane thereof.

82. (Previously submitted) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is integrally formed with the core wire.

83. (Previously submitted) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 103 in which the guide wire comprises a sleeve extending from the bulbous portion in a proximal direction along the core wire beyond the distal portion of the core wire, one end of the sleeve being secured to the bulbous portion of the guide wire, and the other end of the sleeve being secured to the core wire.

84. (Currently amended) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 83 in which the distal end of the sleeve is ~~of a~~ radiopaque.

85. (Cancelled).

86. (Cancelled).

87. (Currently amended) In combination a catheter for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, and an elongated guide wire, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending central axis, ~~and the guide wire~~ extending axially between a distal end ~~for accessing the remote site, and a spaced apart~~ and a proximal end, ~~and the guide wire~~ comprising an elongated core wire extending from the proximal end and terminating in a distal portion adjacent the distal end of the guide wire the distal portion of the core wire being of substantially rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of spaced apart major surfaces, and a pair of spaced apart minor surfaces extending between the major surfaces, ~~and the distal portion adjacent the distal end of the guide wire~~ further defining a central major plane lying intermediate the major surfaces and bisecting the minor surfaces, the major surfaces of the distal portion of the core wire converging towards the distal end, and a central minor plane lying intermediate the minor surfaces and bisecting the major surfaces, wherein the distal portion of the core wire is bent into a curved configuration in the central major plane for forming an alignment portion lying in the central major plane and extending from the bend at an angle greater than zero relative to the central axis for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.

88. (Currently amended) A method for forming an elongated guide wire for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending central axis, ~~and the guide wire~~ extending

axially between a distal end ~~for accessing the remote site~~ and a spaced apart proximal end, the method comprising:

providing an elongated core wire extending from the proximal end and terminating in a distal portion of circular transverse cross-section adjacent the distal end of the guide wire,

forming the distal portion of the core wire to be of substantially rectangular transverse cross-section thereby defining a pair of spaced apart major surfaces, and a pair of spaced apart minor surfaces extending between the major surfaces, the major surfaces of the distal portion of the core wire converging towards the distal end, the distal portion further defining a central major plane lying intermediate the major surfaces and bisecting the minor surfaces, and a central minor plane lying intermediate the minor surfaces and bisecting the major surfaces, wherein

prior to forming the distal portion of circular transverse cross-section of the core wire to be of the substantially rectangular transverse cross-section, the distal portion of circular transverse cross-section is bent into a curved configuration to form an alignment portion adjacent the distal end of the core wire extending from the bend at an angle greater than zero relative to the central axis, and

the bent distal portion of the curved configuration is then shaped to be of the substantially rectangular transverse cross-section with the alignment portion and the bend being of the substantially rectangular transverse cross-section, and the alignment portion lying in the central major plane for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.

- 89. (Cancelled).
- 90. (Cancelled).
- 91. (Cancelled).
- 92. (Cancelled).
- 93. (Cancelled).
- 94. (Cancelled).

95. (Cancelled).
96. (Previously presented) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the alignment portion extends relative to the central axis at an angle up to 30°.
97. (Cancelled).
98. (Previously presented) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is of dimensions for retaining the distal portion in the curved configuration formed by the bend.
99. (Previously presented) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is bendable in the central minor plane thereof for facilitating bending of the distal portion with at least a part of the alignment portion bent out of the central major plane to facilitate guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.
100. (Previously presented) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is of material for facilitating manual bending of the distal portion in the central minor plane thereof.
101. (Previously presented) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is of stainless steel material.
102. (Previously presented) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is formed separately from the core wire, and is secured thereto.
103. (Previously presented) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire terminates in a bulbous portion at the distal end of the guide wire for facilitating guiding of the guide wire through vessels of the subject without damaging the vessels.
104. (Previously presented) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 103 in which the bulbous portion is radiused.
105. (Previously presented) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 103 in which the bulbous portion defines the distal end of the guide wire and defines a hemispherical distal end.
106. (Withdrawn) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 81 in which the reinforcing means extends along at least a portion of the distal portion of the core wire from a proximal end of the

distal portion.

107. (Withdrawn) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 81 in which the reinforcing means extends along at least a part of the alignment portion, and terminates at a location spaced apart from the distal end of the alignment portion.

108. (New) An elongated guide wire for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending central axis, the guide wire extending axially between a distal end and a proximal end, the guide wire comprising an elongated core wire extending from the proximal end and terminating in a distal portion adjacent the distal end of the guide wire the distal portion of the core wire being of substantially rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of spaced apart major surfaces, and a pair of spaced apart minor surfaces extending between the major surfaces, the minor surfaces of the distal portion of the core wire diverging towards the distal end, the distal portion adjacent the distal end of the guide wire further defining a central major plane lying intermediate the major surfaces and bisecting the minor surfaces, and a central minor plane lying intermediate the minor surfaces and bisecting the major surfaces, wherein the distal portion of the core wire is bent into a curved configuration in the central major plane for forming an alignment portion lying in the central major plane and extending from the bend at an angle greater than zero relative to the central axis for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.

109. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 108 in which the alignment portion extends relative to the central axis at an angle in the range of 30° to 90°.

110. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 108 in which the distal portion of the core wire is of a material for retaining the distal portion in the curved configuration formed by the bend.

111. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 108 in which the distal portion of the core wire is integrally formed with the core wire.

112. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 108 in which the distal portion of the core wire terminates in a bulbous portion at the distal end of the guide wire for facilitating guiding of the guide wire through vessels of the subject without damaging the vessels.

113. (New) A guide wire as in Claim 112 in which the guide wire comprises a sleeve extending from the bulbous portion in a proximal direction along the core wire beyond the distal portion of the core wire, one end of the sleeve being secured to the bulbous portion of the guide wire, and the other end of the sleeve being secured to the core wire.

114. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 113 in which the distal end of the sleeve is radiopaque.

115. (New) A method for forming an elongated guide wire for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending central axis and, the guide wire extending axially between a distal end and a proximal end, the method comprising:

providing an elongated core wire extending from the proximal end and terminating in a distal portion of circular transverse cross-section adjacent the distal end of the guide wire,

forming the distal portion of the core wire to be of substantially rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of spaced apart major surfaces, and a pair of spaced apart minor surfaces extending between the major surfaces, the minor surfaces of the distal portion of the core wire diverging towards the distal end, the distal portion further defining a central major plane lying intermediate the major surfaces and bisecting the minor surfaces, and a central minor plane lying intermediate the minor surfaces and bisecting the major surfaces, wherein

prior to forming the distal portion of circular transverse cross-section of the core wire to be of the substantially rectangular transverse cross-section, the distal portion of circular transverse cross-section is bent into a curved configuration to form an alignment portion adjacent the distal end of the core wire extending from the bend at an angle greater than zero relative to the central axis, and

the bent distal portion of the curved configuration is then shaped to be of the substantially rectangular transverse cross-section with the alignment portion and the bend being of the substantially rectangular transverse cross-section, and the alignment portion lying in the central major plane for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.